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Senate unit tightens reins on CIA actions

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The CIA and Senate Intelligence Committee have agreed on new covert-action reporting guidelines that a committee source said would restrict CIA director William Casey.

"We thought the guidelines before were pretty clear," the source on the Republican-controlled panel said. The committee had no problems with previous CIA directors, he said.

Some committee members had had personality clashes with Mr. Casey, he said, and less ability or opportunity than before to intervene at the White House level to stop "questionable" CIA operations.

The new guidelines are "designed to ensure that the committee will receive prior notice of significant covert-action activities," a committee statement says.

Mr. Casey reluctantly accepted the guidelines Wednesday night, but only after President Reagan endorsed them, a Senate official said.

"They had some pretty heated arguments," the committee source said about roughly six weeks of staff sessions of representatives of the committee, the CIA and the National Security Council.

The committee will not release specifics of the guidelines, but the source said that under them, "They [CIA] can't use their imagination as much."

The committee began a review of reporting guidelines after the CIA aided in the mining of several Nicaraguan harbors early this year. The panel chairman, Sen. Barry Goldwater, R-Ariz., and its ranking Democrat, Sen. Patrick Moynihan, D-N.Y., said Mr. Casey had

failed in his responsibility to notify them adequately in advance.

The new guidelines "should reduce the chances for a repetition of the kind of problem and misunderstanding which was recently encountered in this area," the committee statement said.

The National Security Act requires that the House and Senate intelligence panels be kept "fully and currently informed" of all intelligence activities, including "any significant anticipated intelligence activity."

The source said that in the past the committees, the White House and the CIA had a common understanding of the requirement but that the new guidelines will, among other things, help remove any ambiguity.

The Senate panel also released a statement this week saying a staff review found the CIA had kept within its \$24 million spending cap for covert activities in Nicaragua for fiscal year 1984.

However, the committee invited Mr. Casey or his representative to testify on the matter in closed session next week "in an effort to clarify" the issue because of news accounts that the CIA exceeded the congressionally imposed limit.

President Reagan is asking for an additional \$21 million for 1984, a request that has been accepted by the Senate but rejected by the House. The White House is trying to work out an agreement.

The money is being used to assist as many as 15,000 CIA-sponsored rebels who have been fighting Nicaraguan government forces and making raids on various government and economic targets.